

REMARKS

Claims 1 - 33 remain active in this application. The specification has been reviewed and editorial revisions made where seen to be appropriate. Claims 1, 5 - 10, 18, 20, 21, 25, 28 and 29 have been amended to improve form. Support for the amendments of the claims is found throughout the application, particularly in Figures 16 - 19 and the description thereof on pages 34 - 42. No new matter has been introduced into the application. The withdrawal of the previous requirement for restriction is noted with appreciation.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1 - 33 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite due to reference to merging of fault information in "different" or "first, second and third" manners in claims 1, 5, 18, 20, 21, 25 (sic - 26), 28 and 29. The Examiner also asserts that the manner in which data is merged *for each kind of fault* must be recited. This ground of rejection and the Examiner's assertion are respectfully traversed, particularly as being moot in view of the above amendments.

First of all, there is no requirement that the claims *explain* the invention but only define it in a manner which distinguishes from the prior art and which allows the scope of the claims to be reasonably determined. Since no prior art has been applied against the claims, the Examiner has presumably already determined that the claims are distinct from the prior art. The invention achieves its principal meritorious functions by merging pieces of terminal information at different time planes in such a manner that the logic value of the various possible types of fault is consistent with the behavior of the logic values of the nodes of partial circuits of the device under test. Accordingly, while numerous examples of logic suitable for making such groupings of fault candidates in

accordance with different types of faults are disclosed (including, for example, logical operations on lists of faults of another type as noted in the paragraph bridging pages 30 and 31), and since the use of weighting and merging pieces of related fault terminal information in different manners in order to discriminate between different types of faults is recited in the claims as originally filed, there is no basis for a requirement such as the Examiner appears to assert for restricting the claims to a particular logical combination specific to each particular type of fault that is discriminated.

Nevertheless, to expedite the prosecution of this application, claims 1, 5, 18, 20, 21, 26, 28 and 29 have been amended to state the criterion upon which the discrimination is based. In particular regard to claims 20, 21, 28 and 29, it is respectfully pointed out that the consideration of nodes from different groups is, itself, sufficient for discrimination of bridge-fault candidates. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the scope of the claims can be readily determined, no ambiguity is presented and no basis for a rejection based on asserted indefiniteness remains in the claims since the scope thereof can be readily determined. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of this sole ground of rejection in the application is respectfully requested.

Since all rejections, objections and requirements contained in the outstanding official action have been fully answered and shown to be in error and/or inapplicable to the present claims, it is respectfully submitted that reconsideration is now in order under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §1.111(b) and such reconsideration is respectfully requested. Upon reconsideration, it is also respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance and such action is therefore respectfully requested.

If an extension of time is required for this response to be considered as being timely filed, a conditional petition is hereby made for such extension of time. Please charge any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-2041.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marshall M. Curtis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Marshall" being more prominent.

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In the Drawings:

Please approve the change in Figures 1 and 11 as shown in red in the attached drawing sheets to correct spelling of a legend in element 24 of Figure 1 and elements B4 and B5 of Figure 11.

Annotated Marked-Up Drawings

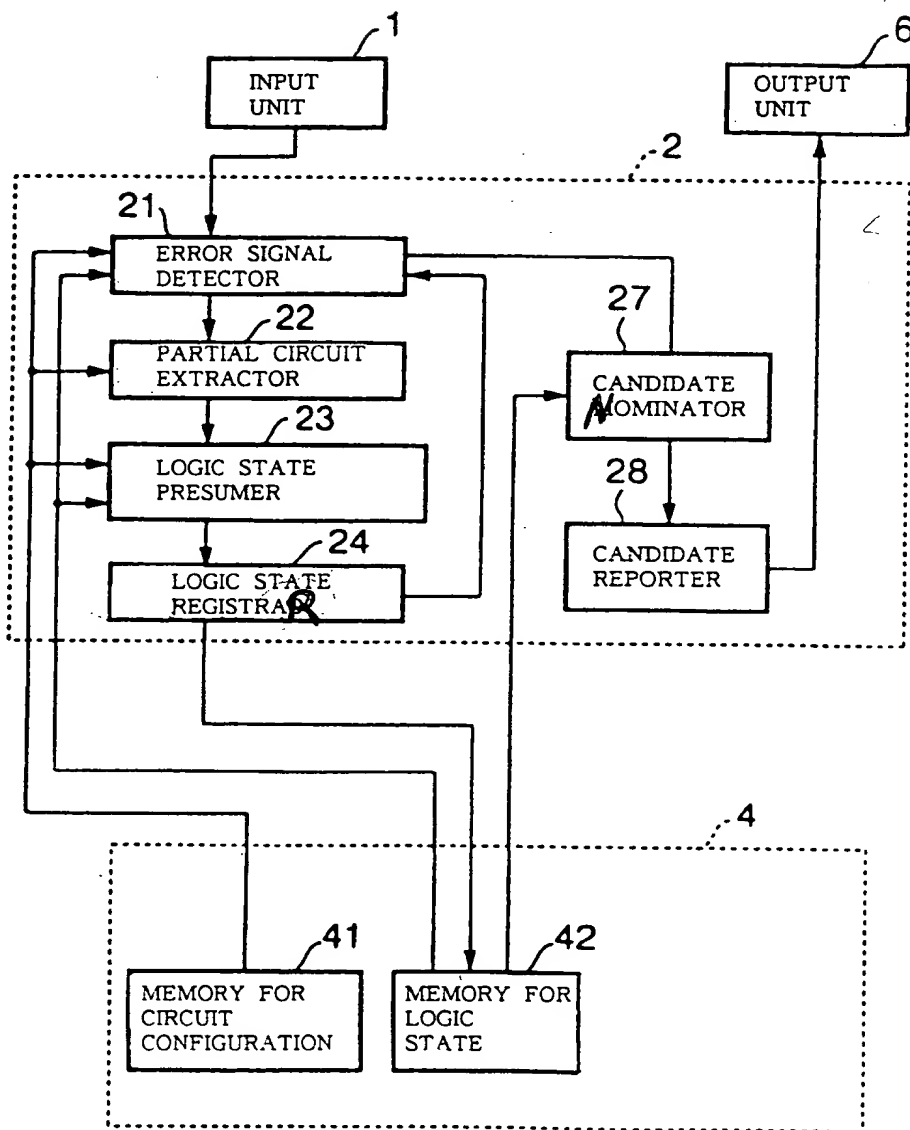


Fig. 1
PRIOR ART

Annotated Marked-Up Drawings

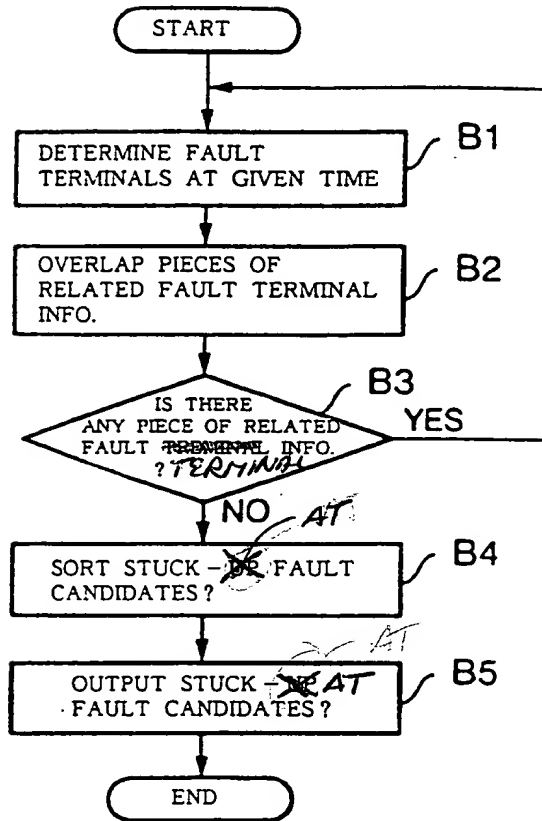


Fig. 11